

Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the continuous production of composite or multi-layer membrane tubes, the multi-layer membrane tubes comprising a porous support layer, mainly determining the mechanical strength of the membrane, and, adjacent to said porous support layer, a second layer of a material of different chemical nature, said second layer mainly determining the separation properties of the membrane (separating layer), said process comprising the steps of:

winding a respective flat sheet composite membrane lengthwise or spirally into a tubular form and forming a membrane tube, the separating layer of said membrane facing to the inside,

welding or gluing the edges of said membrane together, either in an overlapping or joint fashion~~by butt welding~~,

then applying on from the inside of onto said butt seam or overlapping area a strip of a sealing material which can be solidified, and

finally solidifying said sealing material.

2. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 in which the flat sheet composite membrane comprises an additional carrier layer made from woven or non-woven fabric.

3. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 in which the membrane tube is formed by winding said flat sheet composite membrane as a tape spirally around a mandrel or shaft.

4. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 in which the sealing material the same polymer from which the separating layer of the membrane is made.

5. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 3 in which the sealing material is applied by means of nozzle.

6. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 5 in which said nozzle for the application of said sealing material is located on said mandrel or shaft around which said flat sheet composite membrane strip is formed into a membrane tube, and in which the steps of forming the membrane tube, gluing or welding the edges, application of the sealing material on the welding seam or overlapping area are performed in ~~one step~~ a single operation.
7. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 additionally comprising applying to said membrane tube, in addition to the carrier layer, one or more porous drainage layers.
8. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 2 in which the membrane tube is formed by winding said flat sheet composite membrane as a tape spirally around a mandrel or shaft.
9. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 8 in which the sealing material the same polymer from which the separating layer of the membrane is made.
10. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 8 in which the sealing material is applied by means of nozzle.
11. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 10 in which said nozzle for the application of said sealing material is located on said mandrel or shaft around which said flat sheet composite membrane strip is formed into a membrane tube, and in which the steps of forming the membrane tube, gluing or welding the edges, application of the sealing material on the welding seam or overlapping area are performed in ~~one step~~ a single operation.
12. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 11 additionally comprising applying to said membrane tube, in addition to the carrier layer, one or more porous drainage layers.
13. (Canceled)
14. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 2 additionally comprising applying to said membrane tube, in addition to the carrier layer, one or more porous drainage layers.